

LOSS OF THE MAINE.

American Battleship Blown Up and Sunk in Harbor of Havana.

Cause of Explosion Not Yet Determined—Appalling Loss of Life—An Inquiry Ordered, Much Excitement Occasioned—Many Suspect Faulty.

Between 1 and 2 o'clock in the morning of Wednesday, the 15th inst., Secretary of the Navy Long was aroused by the messenger who brought a dispatch from Capt. Sigbee to the effect that the United States battleship Maine had been blown up and destroyed in Havana at 9:40 the previous evening; that the ship had sunk and a large number of the men had been killed. He asked the suspension of public opinion.

Nothing since the shooting of President Garfield has created the sensation in Washington produced the next morning when the dispatch became public property through the morning papers. Popular judgment was staggered. The question was at once raised whether the destruction of the Maine had occurred by accident or was a result of Spanish treachery. That question is still unanswered, although it is to be observed that those highest in authority in Washington, so

my ship was gone. In such a structure as the Maine, the effects of such an explosion are not for a moment in doubt.

"I made my way through the long pass in the dark, growing from side to side to the hatchway and thence to the poop, being among the earliest to reach that spot. So soon as I recognized the officers I ordered the high explosives to be flooded, and I then directed that the boats available be lowered to rescue the wounded or drowning.

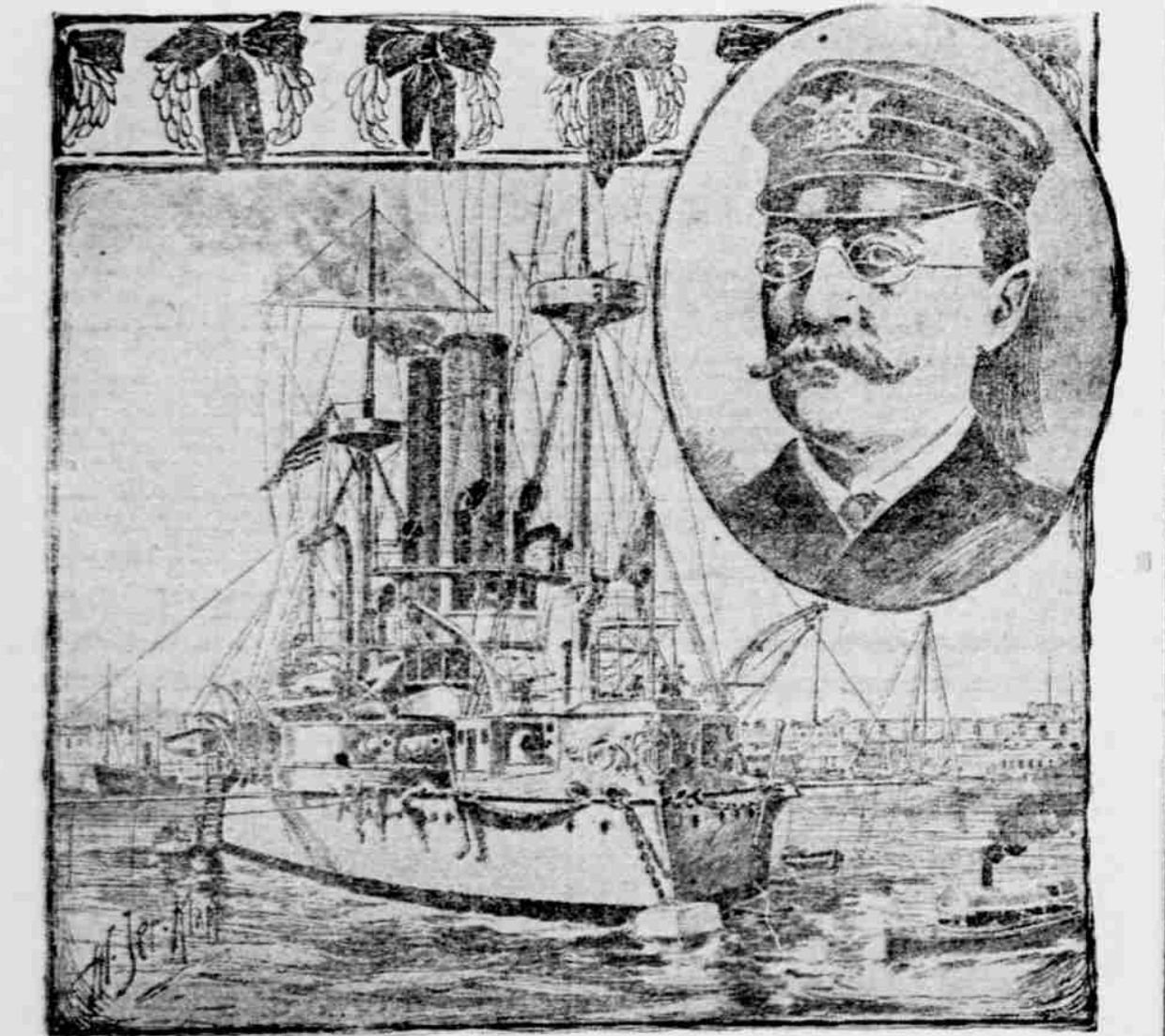
"Discipline in a perfect measure prevailed. There was no more confusion than a call to general quarters would produce,—not as much.

"I soon saw, by the light of the flames, that all my officers and crew left alive and on board, surrounded me. I cannot form any idea of the time, but it seemed five minutes from the time I reached the poop until I left, the last man it was possible to reach having been saved. It must have been three-quarters of an hour or more, however, from the amount of work done.

"I remember the officers and men worked together lowering the boats and that the gig took some time to lower. I did not notice the rain of debris described by Lieut. Blandin or others who were on deck at the time of the first explosion, but I did observe the explosion of the fixed ammunition and wonder that more were not hurt thereby.

"Without going beyond the limits of what was proper in the harbor of a friendly power, I always maintain precautions against attack, and the quarter watch was ordered to have ammunition for the smaller guns ready to hand, so that in the improbable event of an attack on the ship it would have been found ready. It was this ammunition which exploded as the heat reached it.

The Maine was styled by Secretary of the



THE BATTLESHIP MAINE AS SHE WAS, AND HER COMMANDER CAPT. SIGBEE.

As an expression of opinion has been made, incline to the theory that it was an accident. Capt. Sigbee and the officers of the Maine also appear to entertain the view that the disaster was due to the explosion of one of the small magazines on the starboard side forward due to heat from combustion in the coal bunkers. There was more than one explosion, according to various reports, but whether two or three or more is not clear. The loss of life was appalling, amounting to 255, out of a complement of 355 officers and men. As soon as the explosion occurred, which destroyed the forward part of the ship, she began to sink rapidly, and her bows were lowered, as were those from the Albatross XI, the Spanish man-of-war, which was the anchor near by the Maine at the time, and the Ward line steamship City of Washington. By this means 10 of the men were rescued, one of whom has since died, many of them badly hurt. The injured were taken on board the Spanish man-of-war and to hospitals in the city. A torpedo boat and a light-house tender were at once forwarded from Key West, and the wounded and other survivors were brought to the latter place, except a few too badly hurt to travel, and Capt. Sigbee and nine officers and one or two attendants, who remained in Havana, pending the investigation of the disaster.

Only two officers were lost, owing to the fact that the explosion was forward, where are located the quarters of the crew. The missing officers are Lieut. Fred W. Jenkins and Assistant Engineer Darwin H. Merritt.

Upon the assembling of Congress on Wednesday a resolution of sympathy and condolence was unanimously adopted. President McKinley sent a message of condolence to Capt. Sigbee, the Queen Regent of Spain sent a message to the President, and the President in turn thanked the Spanish Government for the courtesies shown the wounded, which, it must be admitted, were generously extended by both Gen. Blanco and the municipal authorities in Havana without stint. Emperor William sent a message of condolence to the President, and the cable dispatches from London showed that the affair had created a profound sensation in England.

Admiral Sigsbee, commanding the fleet at the Dry Tortugas, has ordered a Board of Inquiry to investigate the matter, consisting of Capt. W. T. Sampson, Commander of the battleship Iowa; Capt. F. E. Chadwick, commanding the cruiser New York; Lieutenant-Commander Potter, executive officer of the New York; Lieutenant-Commander Adolph Marx, executive officer of the Vermont; and later will act as Judge-Advocate of the court. The Board has convened at Havana to conduct a most searching investigation into the cause of the loss of the ship. Until their report shall have been received probably little light can be thrown upon the matter than we have at present.

The ships lie in 20 feet of water on a bottom of mud. Congress has promptly appropriated \$200,000 to proceed with the work of raising the hull, and according to the opinion of experts at the Navy Department it is possible to raise the ship and put her again in commission by the expenditure of about \$1,000,000 and one year's work.

The Spanish Government proposed, through our State Department, to join in the investigation but this President McKinley has flatly refused, but firmly declined, and no foreign power will be permitted to interfere in the inquiry by our own board of officers. Assistant Secretary of State Day politely conveyed this message to Madrid on Saturday last.

The news from reliable sources from Cuba is to the effect that while the Captain-General and municipal officers extended every official courtesy and made appropriate expressions of regret, the facts remain that the ultra-Spanish class in Cuba is in a state of exultation at the loss of the American battleship. Below is a statement of the affair by Capt. Sigbee to an associated press reporter:

CAPT. SIGBEE'S STATEMENT.

"On the night of the explosion," said Capt. Sigbee, "I had not retired. I was writing letters. I find it impossible to describe the sound or shock, but the impression remains of something awe-inspiring, terrifying, of noise, reading, vibrating, all-pervading. There was nothing in the former experience of any one on board to increase the explosion. I recall the first great shock. I cannot myself recall how many sharp detonations I heard, not more than two or three—I knew

DOINGS OF CONGRESS.

Abstract of the Important Proceedings in Both Houses.

The Senate, on Feb. 15, passed the Fortification appropriation bill.

On motion of Mr. Pettus the appropriation for the construction of sea walls and embankments was increased from \$30,000 to \$55,000.

An amendment offered by Mr. Chandler increasing the amount appropriated for powder and projectiles for a reserve supply for armament and fortifications from \$850,000 to \$950,000 was adopted.

In the Senate on Wednesday, the venerable Senator Morrill, of Vermont, opposed the ratification of the Hawaiian treaty.

The debate on the bankruptcy bill opened on Wednesday in the House. Gen. Henderson, of Iowa, opened the debate in favor of the bill. In concluding his remarks he said:

"In general terms it may be said that under the provisions of this bill the honest bankrupt will be treated with the consideration and within a reasonable time be discharged. The dishonest bankrupt will be explicitly charged with his wrong-doing, deliberately tried, and, if guilty, punished. The estate will be as quickly reduced to cash as possible and distributed to the creditors."

The Senate on Feb. 17, Mr. Allen, of Nebraska, offered a resolution that the Committee on Naval Affairs make an immediate and thorough investigation into the cause of the disaster to the battleship Maine.

Mr. Hale, of Maine, Chairman of the Naval Affairs Committee, said he had no objection to the reference of the resolution to his Committee, but he did not deem it desirable for the Committee now to proceed with an investigation of the disaster. He said that the Navy Department is making an investigation of the disaster, but is employing all the means in its power to ascertain the truth. The resolution went over.

The disaster to the battleship Maine was provocative of a spirited and acrimonious debate in the Senate on Feb. 18.

To the resolution offered by Mr. Allen, of Nebraska, Mr. Mason, of Illinois, proposed an amendment striking out all after the word "Resolved," and inserting the following:

"By the Senate, the House of Representatives concurring, That a joint committee of five, consisting of three members of the House and two of the Senate, be appointed to investigate the disaster to the battleship."

Mr. Hale expressed the hope that Mr. Mason would press his substitute. He said that the Navy Department is making an investigation of the disaster, but is employing all the means in its power to ascertain the truth. The resolution went over.

Mr. Mason answered Mr. Hale in a speech replete with sensational and pyrotechnic utterances.

"I understand," said Mr. Hale, "that the Navy Department is making an investigation of the disaster, but is employing all the means in its power to ascertain the truth. The resolution went over."

Plans were finally prepared for the Maine and the Texas with a minimum draft of 22 feet, to be built of steel with ram bow, twin screws, protected deck and complete electric outfit, each to make 17 knots, when fully equipped with great coal carrying capacity. There was to be two-thirds steel power and an armament of four 10-inch and 6-inch guns, with a secondary battery of rapid-firing guns, among which were 12 six-pounders and six one-pounders.

The plans finally selected, as presented by Constructor Wilson, were based upon the famous Brazilian armored cruiser Riachuelo built in England.

The Maine had a length on the load water line of 315 feet, a breadth of 57 feet, and a draft of 22 feet. Her twin screws were 6,415 tons. Her twin screws were propelled by vertical triple-expansion engines of 9,000 maximum indicated horsepower, giving her a speed of 17 knots an hour. Her heavy battery was protected by steel armor 10 1/2 inches thick, and her waterline armor 12 inches thick.

The keel of the Maine was laid in 1888. She was launched Nov. 15, 1890, being christened by little Alice Tracy Wilmerding, granddaughter of the Secretary of the Navy. She made 15.37 knots on her official trial trip with her guns on a beam sea.

A handsome, costly service of silver was contributed to the ship by the patriotic citizens of the State of Maine; whether this has been lost is not yet known.

The hull and machinery of the ship cost \$2,500,000, and the total expense of ship and equipment ready for action was probably not far from \$5,000,000.

The resolution was prepared at the Navy Department, and introduced by the request of Secretary Long, who wrote a lengthy letter setting forth the situation.

The House adopted the resolution when presented. The resolution was then introduced in both Houses and the debate in the Senate were listened to by a large number of spectators.

In the House on Saturday was passed the Bankruptcy Bill which is a substitute for the Nelson Bill, passed by the Senate at the extra session last summer. It is considered less drastic than the bill passed by the last House by a vote of 157 to 87. The bill was passed by a majority of 35, the vote standing—yeas, 159; nays, 124. Eighteen Republicans voted against the bill and 12 Democrats for it. The Populists, with one exception, voted against it. A motion to strike out the involuntary features of the bill was defeated—yeas, 158; nays, 124. A motion to amend the bill was also defeated—yeas, 158; nays, 124.

Mr. Allen's resolution for a Congressional investigation of the Maine disaster was adopted on Monday. It was introduced by the resolution "immediate" was stricken from the record.

PENSION DECISIONS.

Cases Disposed of by Assistant Secretary Davis.

Action of the Bureau was reversed last week by Assistant Secretary Davis, in the case of James W. Murray, late of Co. H, 9th U. S. Vet. Vol.

Mr. Murray's pensioner was receiving \$12 per month on account of loss of sight of left eye, and was dropped from the rolls in 1892. He filed claims for renewal and was restored to the rolls from October 20, 1896, and \$6 per month for the same disability. The Medical Referee expressed the opinion that he should not have been dropped, but his rating only reduced. He refused to restore him from date of dropping at reduced rating is based on the fact that he has only filed claim for renewal and not for restoration. Assistant Secretary Davis holds that "this action is chiefly technical; that the words 'renewal' and 'restoration' in application are generally interchangeable, and that this claimant having applied for renewal and admitted to be entitled to restoration, should be restored from the date of dropping without other application."

Mr. Davis reversed the Bureau decision in the case of an attorney in the claim of James P. McKay, Co. A, 30th Ohio. In this case Mr. McKay decided that where proof as to non-vicious habits is required and is obtained by means of a medical examination held under an order forwarded and returned by an attorney in good standing, who is not chargeable with notice of the requirements of the law, such a certificate thereby obtains the evidence as to non-vicious habits, it being evidence relative to matter usually furnished by attorneys, and that the service rendered is material, then such attorney may be considered as having rendered material service, and should be paid the fee.

Mr. Davis rendered a decision in the Dr. Mary E. Walker case, who has been pending in the Department for many years. Dr. Walker, who is pensioned as a Contract or Acting Assistant Surgeon on account of disease of eyes, filed Feb. 7, 1898, a second motion for reconsideration of a decision rendered March 3, 1897, wherein the action of the Bureau was sustained in the rejection of her claim for increase of pension. This claim for increase was based not alone on the actual increase of disability from January 1, 1897, but also on other alleged results of disease of eyes, and it was insisted that she was entitled to a rating of \$9 per month. Mr. Davis says, in his decision:

"In the first place the pension granted as being due to applicant's service in the army was for disease of eyes alone, but there has been no evidence at any time showing that the deeper structures of the eyes were affected, unless from some congenital defect, asthenopia, or astigmatism, which could not be included in the pensionable disability. The former decisions which hold that no increase of pensioned disability and no special results thereof are shown must be reaffirmed."

An instance of the tardiness of the Pension Bureau in relieving the wants of some veterans entitled to pension was shown the other day when it allowed a pension to Louis A. Sinsatauch. He died March 6, 1897, and nearly six years after his death, and seven years after the filing of his application, his pension is allowed. However, after the death of the applicant in this case, the widow completed the case, and will now be entitled to quite a large sum.

From January 2, 1897, to the date of the filing of the application, to March 6, 1897, she will receive \$6 a month, the pension her husband would have drawn during his lifetime from March 6, 1897, to the present time she will receive back pension to the amount of \$2 a month.

Events of General Interest in the National Capital.

MONDAY, Feb. 14.—The State Department received a cable dispatch from Minister Woodford, announcing that the Government of Spain had disavowed the letter of Dupuy de Lome to Senor Canalejas. The President authorized the announcement that the incident had been closed. The cable dispatch also notified the President of the appointment of Senor Luis Polo y Bernabe, son of Vice-Admiral Polo, as Minister of Spain to the United States. Senor Bernabe was once Secretary of the Spanish Legation here. He is said to be a diplomat of experience and capacity.

TUESDAY, Feb. 15.—By a vote of 10 to 3, the House Committee on Military Affairs today refused to report favorably the O'Dell bill authorizing any denomination, sect or religion to erect a building for religious worship on any military reservation in the country. The action on the measure was taken by a projected caucus of the members of the committee have expressed themselves as in favor of building a ship to replace the Maine, and also of authorizing the ship recommended by the Secretary of the Navy. It is said that the disaster has aroused a feeling that there should be more liberality, the practical result of which may be the acceptance by the House, with little contest, of the Senate amendments increasing the appropriations for fortifications about \$4,000,000, and the authorization of the entire dry-dock scheme recommended by the Dry-dock Board.

A delegation from the woman suffragists, in convention in this city last week, appeared before the House committee on Judiciary for a hearing on a resolution proposing a woman suffrage amendment to the Constitution. There were several fair representatives from the States that allow women to vote, who explained what they termed the benefit from woman suffrage to those States. Addresses were made by Senator Martha H. Cannon, of Utah; Mrs. Martha Conine, member of the Assembly of Colorado; Mrs. Warren, of the Senator from Wyoming; Ellen H. Price, of the School Board of Pennsylvania, and Helen Blackburn, of the woman's suffrage movement in England. The Senate Committee on Woman Suffrage also gave a hearing to the woman suffragists, and the addresses were quite spirited.

The Civil Service Commission in its annual report, shows some interesting facts. The whole number of persons examined during the year was 49,415, of whom 25,563 passed. The number of appointments were 4,136. The average age of appointees to the departmental service during 1897 was less than 25 1/2 years, and discussing the statistics bearing on this question the Commission suggests that they afford no foundation for the charge that the merit system tends to lead to a civil pension list.

Appropriations of what were alleged to be violations of the Civil Service rules, the removal of Pension Examining Surgeons from about 25 classified local Boards, in the creation of additional Boards without examination, and in a number of removals, reductions, and promotions in the Bureau at Washington, all instances of apparent violations of the Civil Service rules, have been referred to the Secretary of the Interior.

An interesting Enterprise.

The business of making artistic reproductions of valuable or highly-cherished pictures is well worth looking into. Mr. Gripp reports that a vast number of persons have found profitable employment through his agency. He advertised extensively in these columns last Fall, and we have so far received no complaint of dissatisfaction on the part of any of our readers. His address is H. A. Gripp, German Artist, 78 Gripp Building, Tryon, Pa.

Cure Constipation.

and you cure its Consequences.

These are some of the Consequences of Constipation:

biliousness
loss of appetite
pimples
sour stomach
depression
coated tongue
nightmare
palpitation
cold feet
debility

dizziness
weakness
backache
vomiting
jaundice
piles
pallor
stitch
irritability
nervousness

headache
vomiting
torpid liver
heartburn
foul breath
sleeplessness
drowsiness
hot skin
cramps
throbbing head

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Dr. J. C. Ayer's Pills are a specific for all diseases of the liver, stomach, and bowels. These testimonials are from the thousands received:—

"I suffered from constipation which assumed such an obnoxious form that I feared it would cause a stoppage of the bowels. After vainly trying various remedies, I began to take Ayer's Pills. Two boxes effected a complete cure."

D. BURKE, Saco, Maine.

"For eight years I was afflicted with constipation, which at last became so bad that the doctors could do no more for me. Then I began to take Ayer's Pills, and soon the bowels recovered their natural and regular action."

WM. H. DeLAUCET, Dorset, Ont.

"Ayer's Pills are the best in the world. I used to be annoyed with constipation until I began using them; now I have no trouble of that kind any more, and I attribute my recovery to the use of your valuable Cathartic Pills."

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loss of appetite
pimples
sour stomach
depression
coated tongue
nightmare
palpitation
cold feet
debility

dizziness
weakness
backache
vomiting
jaundice
piles
pallor
stitch
irritability
nervousness

headache
vomiting
torpid liver
heartburn
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